

THE ADVENTURES OF KATHLYN

By HAROLD MAC GRATH

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

Kathlyn Hare, believing her father, Col. Hare, is peril, has summoned her, leaves her home in California to go to him in Allah, India. Umballah, pretender to the throne of that principality, has imprisoned the colonel, named by the late king as his heir, because he fears the American may insist on his royal rights. Upon her arrival in Allah Kathlyn is informed by Umballah that her father being dead, she is to be queen and must marry him forthwith. Because of her refusal she is sentenced to undergo two ordeals with wild beasts.

John Bruce, an American and fellow passenger on the boat which brought Kathlyn to Allah, saves her life. The elephant which carries her from the scene of her trials becomes frightened and runs away, separating her from Bruce and the rest of the party. After a ride filled with peril Kathlyn takes refuge in a ruined temple but her haven is also the abode of a lion and she is forced to flee from it. She finds a retreat in the jungle, only to fall into the hands of a band of slave traders, who bring her to Allah to the public mart. She is sold to Umballah, who, finding her still unsubmitive, throws her into the dungeon with her father.

Bruce and his friends effect the release of Kathlyn and the colonel, and the fugitives are given shelter in the palace of Raja Khan. Supplied with camels and servants by that hospitable prince, the party endeavors to reach the coast, but is overpowered by a band of brigands, and the encounter results in the colonel being delivered to Umballah. Kathlyn and Bruce escape from their captors and return to Allah, where Kathlyn learns that her father, while nominally king, is in reality a prisoner. Kathlyn's resourcefulness and bravery are the means of rescuing him, and once more they steal away from Allah, but return broken hearted when they learn that Winnie, Kathlyn's young sister, has come to India. Umballah makes her a prisoner. She is forced to enter the palace and in turn is crowned queen of Allah.

One attempt to get Winnie out of the closely guarded palace almost costs Kathlyn her life, but the second plan succeeds, and Kathlyn and Winnie, their father, and Bruce find a hiding place in the home of their Indian friend, Ramabai, and his wife Pundita. The latter is the lawful queen of Allah and public sentiment is in her favor. The people at last, weary of Umballah's misrule, rise against him, with Ramabai, at their head and the colonel and Bruce fighting under him. Kathlyn has been left at home, but when tidings that the revolutionists have been defeated reach her she rushes out and assumes command of the scattered forces. Her presence inspires them with fresh courage and under her leadership the tide is turned and the rebels are victorious.

The photodramas corresponding to the installments of "The Adventures of Kathlyn" may now be seen at a number of the leading moving picture theaters. By this unique arrangement with the Selig Polyscope company it is therefore possible not only to read "The Adventures of Kathlyn" in this paper but also to keep pace with each installment of it at the moving picture theater.

(Copyright, 1914, by Harold Mac Grath.)

CHAPTER XX.

THEY tell of it to this day in Allah. To be sure, they will elaborate and prevaricate, twist and distort, as only the Asiatic knows how, having an innate horror of brevity and directness; but the basic truth of Kathlyn's exploit is held intact. The hoary old beggar who sits with his beggar's bowl near the steps of the mosque, loquacious, verbose, and flowery, for an S-s-n-a piece will tell you the tale, which happened all of thirty years ago.

"Thanks, Huzoor!" he will begin, carefully scrutinizing the coin and testing its solidity between two forefingers of teeth for a man of 70. "Ah, that was a day! It was like a day I knew it Delhi, when I was a child; for I saw the Great Muting. I saw the powder magazine. . . . Ah, yes, Huzoor! it is about the white goddess that you wish to know. But help me over to Ali's coffee house, for it is hot here, and it is a long story."

So you take the old rascal over to and seat him under the umbrella of Ali, and you will buy him a sugar drink and a smoke from a water bottle, he having brought forth suggestively a cracked amber mouthpiece.

"Huzoor, she came out of nowhere, in a chain armor that shone like rippling water in the sunshine. She was tall and lithe and vigorous, and as beautiful as a dream of paradise.

"When we saw the Sahib and Ramabai trapped by the cowardly soldiers of the palace we found ourselves without a head. The men who led us had vanished. We huddled like sheep, scattered, formed, fired aimlessly, began to run away. And brave old Lal Singh, with a bullet through his stomach, staggered off. We were without hope. We were bare enough, but bravery has to be directed. We knew only part of Ramabai's plans."

"And what about this man Ahmed?"

"As the kite flies, he ran back to the house of Ramabai when everything had apparently come to an end. For Ahmed loved the white goddess even as you and I love life. He was brave, but as the serpent is—wisely, did not the white queen of all the English give him a bit of copper to wear on his breast because he was wise as well as brave?"

The old beggar tilted his cup without touching it with his lips and let the sweetened water trickle down his throat.

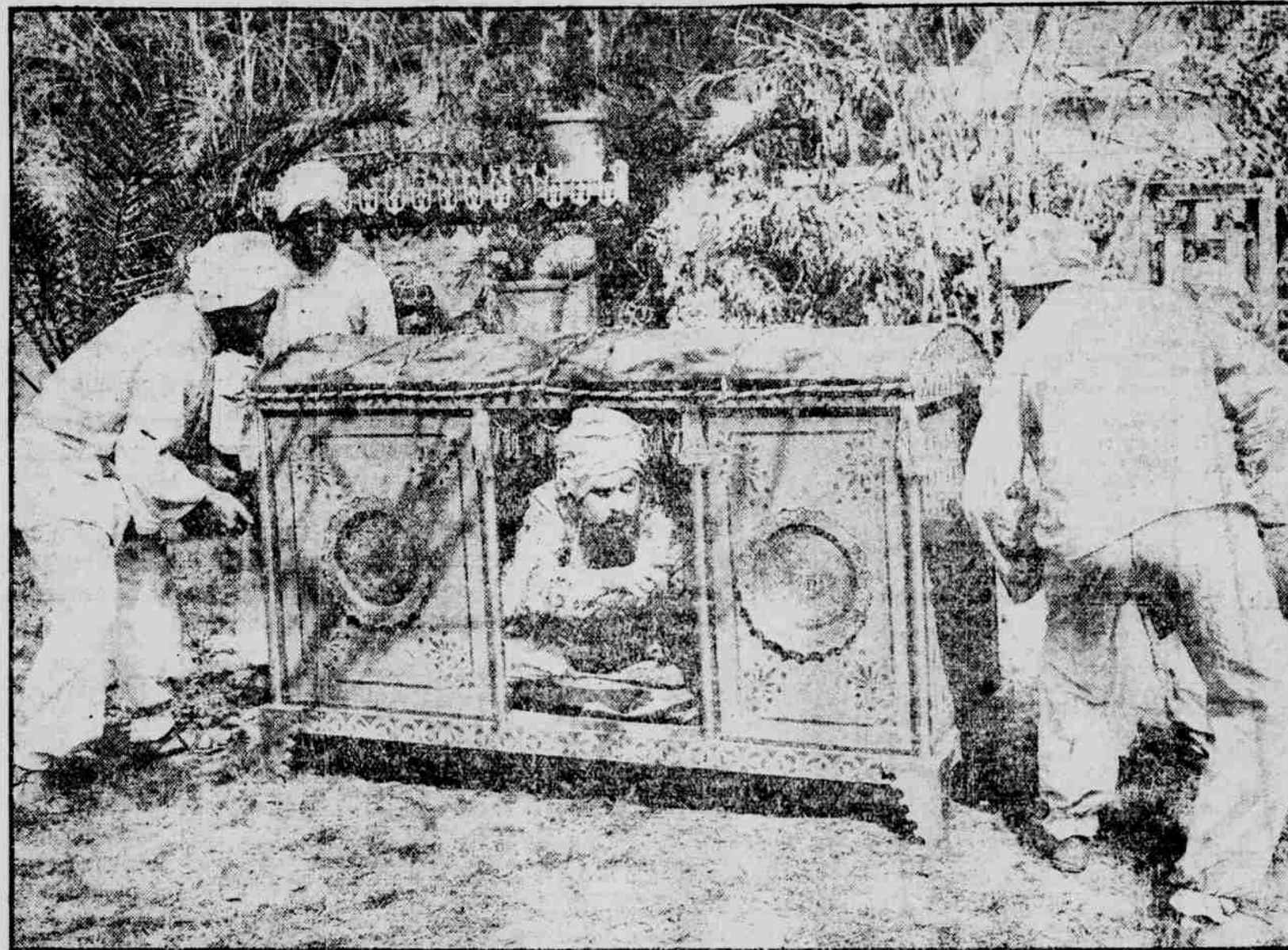
"When one is old, one is always thirsty," he observed. "To go on. So there we were, like sheep. The majority of us did not have sense enough to run away. Huzoor, Umballah had lined up the white men and Ramabai against the wall in the throne room and was about to send them to their gods, then suddenly I noticed a commotion in the rear of the hall. A pathway seemed to be heaved out among us. We were thrown about like sticks in a whirlpool.

"And then I saw her! Ah, Protector of the Poor, you white people rule the world because you always know what you want and when you want it. But it is not natural for us brown people to think and act quickly at the same time. I saw her, and I thought at first that the gates of paradise had opened and Allah himself had set her down among us."

The water bubbles in the bowl of the pipe and a thin stream of smoke trickles from his bearded lips. You must have patience, for he will tell this tale only in his own fashion.

"Straight to the palace steps she ran, waving her arms. Behold! She spoke to us in her own tongue, but Allah is witness that we understood what she was saying! First we grew ashamed, then we stopped running, then we became men, Huzoor. The lead tubes began to speak again; and we found our voices. With yells we followed. And there was battle, battle, battle, to the very foot of the throne.

"She threw herself between the leveled guns and her people. The soldiers could not fire. And Umballah, seeing that in truth he had lost this time—Umballah fled toward the corridors, and one was quick enough to prevent him.



Every one began to hunt Umballah.

A woman who loved him hid him in a palanquin in the garden of brides.

"But we went shouting after him, through this corridor and that. We could not find him. It seems he escaped through one of the chambers in the zenana."

A shrilling of fifes and a rattling of drums distract you and break in upon the story. A company of trim, wary Gurkhas tramp past, and you know by the flag they carry under whose rule Allah works out its destiny today.

"What became of the captain of the guards?"

"He was ordered to the arena lions. But we saved him, losing the arena lions to do so. Huzoor, I am thirsty again."

And you buy him another cup of sweetened water.

"But we cheered the white goddess that day! There are men who will swear that her feet never touched the earth as she walked. But I knew that she was the daughter of Colonel Sahib, and that she had red blood in her veins, like the rest of us. Women are mysteries. Here was one who fought like an ancient warrior; and yet she swooned in her father's arms! That is all today, Huzoor. I am an old man, and my throat dries quickly. Come tomorrow and I will tell you more."

But tomorrow comes to find you interested in something else; and the old beggar juggles his bowl before the steps of the mosque, patiently waiting for another listener.

"Kit, Kit!" cried Kathlyn's father when she came to her senses. "My girl, my girl!"

"Dad!"

"How could you do it?"

"Do what?" vaguely.

"Lead a forlorn cause to victory; you, a girl!"

She brushed back the hair which tumbled about her eyes, glanced at the powder stained faces grouped about her, glanced at the toppled throne, at Bruce, at Ramabai. She made an effort to explain, but the words would not come.

"I would not question her," said Bruce to the Colonel.

"For my part, I never so thoroughly believed in God as I do now. She does not realize what she has done."

The Colonel bent his head reverently.

"We owe our lives to her," said Ramabai. "Somewhere in the dim ages there was a great mother, and today her soul entered the Memsahib."

"Mine!" murmured Bruce. "This beautiful, strange woman is mine! God send the day quickly when I can take her in my arms and guard her! Ramabai," he said aloud, "go to the balcony and proclaim Pundita queen. Let us have done with this before there is any chance of Umballah recovering. What shall we do with the council?"

"Wait!" responded Ramabai. "It is for another to say." And he pointed to the marble flags at his feet.

And all understood what honor meant to this man of dark skin.

"Now," he continued, "I wish to go home at once. We will leave a sufficient guard here to watch over the palace. My wife waits; and the death of Lal Singh may have—"

The same thought flashed through Kathlyn's mind; the dagger. Dying, Lal Singh had declared that Ramabai was a prisoner; and well would Pundita comprehend what that meant.

"Yes, yes! let us go quickly!" Kathlyn cried. Pundita might be dead and Winnie crazed with grief.

They left the palace immediately.

The overthrow of Umballah seemed to be complete. Everywhere the soldiers surrendered, for it was better to have food in the stomach than lead. Tomorrow there could be many a pyre at the burning ghats, but today was a day of victory.

Every one began to hunt for Umballah. There was as yet no price on his head; it was the zest of hunting only that set the people to it. They ran in and out of Umballah's house, and were not above looting, though word had gone forth that Ramabai would have every looter shot if found in the act. But search as they would, they could find no trace of Umballah.

A woman who loved him—the only one loyal to him in all Allah that day—had hidden him in a palanquin in the garden of brides. Crouched down in the narrow space shuddering at the sound of shot, whether near or far, dying a thousand deaths, wishing he had never been taken from the gutter, willing to give up his jewels, his plate, simply to live.

The woman of the zenana, when the tumult died away completely, found some slaves. She made them divest themselves of the royal turbans and assume ordinary white ones. Then she told them to carry the palanquin to a certain house in the fruit bazaar, to go by side streets, alleys, passages, to avoid all gatherings. Once in the house of her sister, the dancer, Umballah would be safe till he could secretly return to his own house and enter the secret chamber.

When Kathlyn left the palace a thunder of cheers greeted her. Kathlyn was forced to mount the durbar throne, much as she loathed to be off. But Bruce anticipated her thought and dispatched one of the revolutionists to the house of Ramabai. Kathlyn held out her hands toward the excited populace, then turned to Ramabai expressively. Ramabai, calm and unruffled as ever, stepped forward and was about to address the people, when the disheveled captain of the guard, whom Umballah had sent to the arena lions, pushed his way to the foot of the platform.

"The arena lions have escaped!"

And there were a dozen lions in all, strong, cruel, and no doubt hungry!

Panic. Men who had been at each other's throat, less you both! But we're not out of the woods yet. We've got to find Umballah and lock him up. When that's done I'll be able to breathe."

"I believe it is as Ahmed says; we'll all pull out of this safely in the end. Now, let's go and get the nets. There will not be a dozen men in the whole town who will have sense enough to shoot the lions as they appear. They'll howl and run for shelter. Ramabai's welcome to Allah. Hi, there's one now; see, coming round the corner! I'll put him."

But ere Bruce could level his weapon the lion turned back, perhaps frightened at the clamor.

Kathlyn was not alarmed upon finding herself separated from the two men she loved so well. Her only concern was to avoid being knocked down and trampled upon. She knew animals. It left quietly to themselves the lions would make for the jungle, but if harried or frightened they would maul any one within reach.

Kathlyn was packed in rather closely, and she was carried past the street which led to the house of Ramabai, though she struggled desperately to push through. She was presently carried into the bazaars. The people in their senseless flight tried to do what they could for her, but self-preservation was their first thought. And it



Umballah had lined up the white men and Ramabai and was about to send them to their gods—

bravely and hardily, turned and fled. It was a foolish panic, senseless, but, like all panics, uncontrollable. Those on the platform ran down the steps and at once were swallowed up by the pressing, trampling crowd.

Bruce and the Colonel, believing that Kathlyn was behind them, fought their way to a clearing, determined to secure nets and take the lions alive. When they turned Kathlyn was gone. For a moment the two men stood as if paralyzed. Then Bruce relieved the tension by smiling. He laid his hand on the Colonel's shoulder.

"She has lost us; but that will not matter. Ordinarily I should be wild with anxiety; but today Kathlyn may go where she will, and nothing but awe and reverence will follow her. Besides, she has her revolver."

"I believe you're right. She will miss us and start right off for Ramabai's. Boy, she is a goddess. She is supernatural!"

"She was this morning. As God is judge, I do not believe she understands or ever will understand what she did. You noticed her eyes? They were like those of a person in a trance. Think of . . . To turn the tide at the supreme moment! That sort of mail; her hair falling about her head. . . . Ah, Colonel, what's the use of beating about the bush? You know I love her. Will you give her to me?"

Without a moment's hesitation the Colonel said: "Yes, John. You have proved yourself a man. God

wasn't the dearest smelling crowd in the world, either. At the same time Kathlyn was fighting vigorously to get free of the mob, Winnie was struggling with Pundita, striving to wrench the dagger from the grief-stricken wife's hand.

"No, no, Pundita!"

"Let me go! My lord is dead, and I wish to follow!"

"You are a Christian!"

"Ah, sir!"

"But he may not be dead. Help, help!"

"Is not Lal Singh there dead? Is that not proof?"

Hither and thither across the floor they fought. But Winnie soon realized that Pundita, being in a frenzy, was strongest. The struggle ended quickly, however, but not through Winnie's efforts. Pundita did something momentous; she fainted, dragging Winnie to the floor with her. The young girl's head came into contact with the wall, and she was stunned for a moment. Upon sitting up she did not know exactly where she was. But the calm, high bred face of the dead Lal Singh recalled the situation clearly, and she went about the resurrection of Pundita.

As the latter's eyes opened wildly Winnie heard a pounding at the door. She was pulled two ways. If she answered the summons Pundita might take advantage of her absence and kill herself. Again, it might be the help for which she had called.

"Yes, John. You have proved yourself a man. God

Instinctively she snatched up the fallen dagger, ran to the door, peered out cautiously, and recognized one of the revolutionists who had left the house but an hour or two since. She flung open the door.

"Pundita?" cried the man.

Winnie caught him by the sleeve and dragged him into the chamber. . . . just in time. The distracted Pundita had plucked another dagger from the wall, and the man stayed her arm even as she struck.

"Highness," he cried, "he lives!" And he recounted the startling events of the morning, the treachery of the palace troops, the coming of Kathlyn in chain armor, the turn of the tide.

"They live!" cried Pundita, and covered her face.

Winnie had not understood a word said, but the expression on Pundita's face was illuminative. She threw her arms around the native woman, and the two of them wept in common. All human beings have two faculties alike, that of weeping and laughing.

To return to Kathlyn: by and by she was able to alight into a doorway, and the howling rattle passed on down the narrow street. The house was deserted, and the hallway and what had been a booth was filled with rubbish. Kathlyn, as she leaned breathlessly against the door, felt it give. And very glad she was of this knowledge a moment later, when two lions galloped into the street, their manes stiff, their tails arched. Doubtless, they were badly frightened.

Kathlyn reached for the revolver she carried and fired at the animals, not expecting to hit one of them, but hoping that the noise of the firearms would avert them into the passage across the way. Instead, they came straight to where she stood.

She stepped inside and slammed the door, holding it and feeling about in vain for lock or bolt.

Evidently the lions had waited outside, undecided, if they could hear them sniffling at the door. If they leaped she was lost, for she could not hope to hold the door against the onrush of beasts as heavy as these lions were.

Elsewhere in the bazaars the Colonel, Bruce, and Ahmed were setting nets for the recapture of the lions, quite confident that Kathlyn was by this time safe in the haven of Ramabai's house.

The girl glanced hurriedly over her shoulder toward the dim rickety staircase. The moment the sniffling ceased she withdrew from the door and ran up the stairs to the first landing, to find all these doors locked! A crash below announced that the lions had heard her and had entered. There was a second flight, and up this flew the girl. She might fire at the beasts, and even if she succeeded in hitting them it would serve only to madden them. One cannot kill lions with a toy.

Still lockless doors! No safety.

She then espied a ladder which gave to the roof top, and up this she climbed. They could not possibly follow her up the ladder, and as she reached the top and it turned back at her presence, she knew that for the present she had nothing to fear from the lions.

The interior of the house was of the flimsiest wood, slovenly put together. Along the roof was a parapet. She left the trap open so that she could see all that went on below. Almost as she looked the tawny bodies swept up to the foot of the ladder, and there remained, snarling and spitting and reaching up as far as they could. Somewhere on the way Kathlyn knew that these lions had tasted blood.

It was in this street dwelt the sister of the woman in the zenana, the woman who loved Umballah.

Kathlyn leaned over the parapet, the street was totally deserted. All the doors of the shops were closed and the windows shut. She must fight it out alone. She drew a deep breath and squared her shoulders, a trick she had long ago learned from her father. She had fought battles alone ere this, so she was not without confidence. Perhaps the lions, finding their efforts futile, would depart. She must wait.

It grew to noon. The sun beat down upon her savagely. Here and there she could see fires in the city. Pillage. The muezzin's tower of the mosque was like a finger pointing to heaven. She could even glimpse a patch of white stucco which belonged to the palace.

And she had fought her way that morning to the steps of the palace, as the daughter of the Gorkh had scaled the steps of the Quirinal in Rome! It was unbelievable! She could not remember anything but the dead Lal Singh and the strong arms of her father as she came out of her swoon. And she had turned defeat into victory! She drew her hand across her eyes.

One of the lions sent up a nerve shaking roar; but Kathlyn did not stir.

Silence.

Then, round the passage she saw a palanquin, carried by slaves. She leaned far over.

"Help!" she cried. "Help!"

The bearers paused abruptly, and the curtain of the palanquin was swept back. The dark sinister visage of Umballah was revealed.

"Thou?" he said. Then his laughter rose up to the girl, motionless through her terror. "Come down, O houri of Saad! Come to the arms of Durga Ram, who loves you! Wilt not? Woe to thee?" dropping his mockery.

"Yes, Durga Ram, it is I!" replied Kathlyn, finding her voice. Insensate rage usurping the throne of terror. "Here I am! come and take me!"

Let him face the lions!

Umballah left the palanquin, opened the door of the house, espied the rubbish in the hall; was in the act of mounting the first step when one of the lions roared again. Drunk as he was, filled with a drunkard's courage, Umballah started back. The lions! Out into the street he went. He turned to the bearers and ordered them to fire the inflammables in the hall. But they refused, for they recognized the chain armor. Mad with rage, Umballah struck at them, entered the hall again, and threw a lighted match into the rubbish.

He left the horrified bearers and staggered to the house where he was to find shelter. He was admitted, the door closed and barred. From a window he watched the progress of the fire. At last! He would pass from Allah, but not without his revenge. It was sweet! She could not escape; the lions would bar the way till it was too late. Let her God save her if he could!

The smoke rose quickly. It volleyed and poured out of the windows, thick and black. Flame tongues darted hither and yon. Higher and higher, till at length the form on the parapet was no longer visible.

Umballah took from his cummerbund his last bottle of wine, broke the neck against the window sill, and drank, cutting his lips as he did so.

(To be continued.)